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Letter dated 24 January 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to my letter dated 17 January 2002 (A/56/778-S/2002/79), I wish to draw your attention to additional attacks perpetrated by Hizbullah terrorists across the Blue Line. Those attacks constitute a serious escalation along the northern border and pose a threat to peace and security in the area.

In the afternoon hours yesterday, Hizbullah launched a heavy attack against Israeli positions in the Mount Dov region. That unprovoked cross-border attack included the use of dozens of mortar shells, anti-tank and anti-aircraft fire and Katyusha rockets. Yesterday's attack comes barely one week after Hizbullah terrorists fired anti-aircraft shells at aircraft that were flying in Israeli airspace, in an incident referred to in my aforementioned letter. Those attacks — taken together with Hizbullah's support for Palestinian terrorist organizations, including Hizbullah's role in the attempted smuggling of 50 tons of weapons aboard the Karine A — signal a substantial escalation in Hizbullah's terrorist campaign against Israel. Other major Hizbullah attacks have been detailed in my letters dated 24 October 2001 (A/56/507-S/2001/1012), 5 October 2001 (A/56/443-S/2001/942), 6 July 2001 (A/56/161-S/2001/673), 16 April 2001 (S/2001/367), 16 February 2001 (A/55/792-S/2001/142), 6 February 2001 (A/55/767-S/2001/111), 26 November 2000 (S/2000/1121), 23 October 2000 (S/2000/1011), 19 October 2000 (S/2000/1002) and 7 October 2000 (S/2000/969).

Despite Israel's full and confirmed compliance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978), Hizbullah has continually launched attacks against Israel across the Blue Line. Those attacks are unleashed from Lebanese territory, with the full support and assistance of the Governments of Syria and Iran, both countries with lengthy and well documented records of support for terrorist activities. Syria and Iran have long provided Hizbullah with financial, political and organizational assistance, and continue to harbour known terrorists and provide them with training grounds. Furthermore, Lebanon's failure to fulfil its obligations under international law and pursuant to Security Council resolutions 425 (1978), 426 (1978), 1310 (2000), 1337 (2001) and 1365 (2001) — which call for the restoration of international peace and security, the return of the effective authority and presence of

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the Government of Lebanon in the south and respect for the integrity of the Blue Line — has granted Hizbullah the freedom necessary to plan and launch cross-border attacks. In the face of continuing attacks emanating from Lebanese territory, Israel reserves its right and its duty under international law to protect its northern border.

As the Secretary-General observed in his most recent report on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, dated 16 January 2002 (S/2002/55), "The Government of Lebanon has continued to let Hizbollah operate close to the Blue Line. More steps can be taken to extend the Government's authority to all of southern Lebanon, as called for by the Council most recently in its resolution 1365 (2001)." The Secretary-General further stressed the critical need to prevent attacks from being launched across the Blue Line and to refrain from any action that could serve to destabilize the situation. Those statements, as well as established principles of international law, belie any contention that armed attacks across the Blue Line are somehow legitimate.

Although the Secretary-General and responsible members of the international community have been unequivocal in demanding respect for the Blue Line, recent events suggest that Hizbullah and its supporters are intent on continuing to escalate cross-border attacks against Israel. The international community must make it unambiguously clear that Hizbullah, with its expansive network of terrorist cells and its long history of committing terrorist atrocities, will not be permitted to flout the will of the Security Council and the principles of international law and continue to operate with impunity. It is imperative that concerted and unrelenting pressure be brought to bear on Hizbullah and the Governments that support it to compel them to bring their actions into accord with the will of the international community and the resolutions of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative